

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In this Amendment, Applicant has amended independent claim 1 to more particularly claim Applicant's invention. In amended claim 1, Applicant now claims that the hydrophilic polymer 11a is substantially ***uniformly dispersed*** in a ***base 11b within the key touch member 11*** and is ***unevenly distributed in an area near a surface of the key touch member***. Applicant respectfully submits that this feature of Applicant's invention is clearly disclosed in Applicant's specification at least at para. 0022 and in Figure 3. As will be further discussed below, Applicant respectfully submits that even if Yoshikawa can be modified by Oshima, as argued by the Examiner in the Office Action, that the modified Yoshikawa reference still does not disclose these features of Applicant's invention.

In the Office Action, the Examiner has rejected independent claim 1 based on Yoshikawa as modified by Oshima. The Examiner argues that the combined references would inherently have the previously claimed hydrophilic polymer distributed unevenly in an area near a surface of the key touch member since the polymer is randomly or unevenly, if viewed under a microscope, distributed in any area of the key touch member, including an area near the key top surface of the key touch member. However, Applicant respectfully submits that this inherent distribution in any area of the key touch member ***cannot disclose*** Applicant's now more-particularly claimed substantially ***uniformly dispersal*** in the ***base 11b within the key touch member 11*** and ***uneven distribution in an area near a surface of the key touch member***. Applicant respectfully submits that this more-particularly claimed uniform dispersal in the base, where there is uneven distribution in an area near the surface, cannot be argued to be inherent since the inherency requires random or uneven distribution in any area of the key touch member, as argued by the Examiner.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that even if Yoshikawa's key touch member can be modified by Oshima to include Applicant's claimed feature where the hydrophilic polymer is unevenly distributed in an area near a surface

of the key touch member, based on the Examiner's inherency argument that the polymer is randomly or unevenly distributed in any area of the key touch member, then this inherency argument by the Examiner precludes an argument that the modified Yoshikawa reference can further disclose Applicant's now claimed feature where the hydrophilic polymer is substantially uniformly dispersed in the base within the key touch member. If the hydrophilic polymer is unevenly distributed in an area near a surface of the key touch member because the polymer is inherently randomly or unevenly distributed in any area of the key touch member, then this inherent random or uneven distribution in any area of the key touch member **cannot result** in a substantially uniform dispersal in the base within the key touch member. The polymer cannot be inherently randomly or unevenly distributed in any area and simultaneously be uniformly dispersed in a particular area.

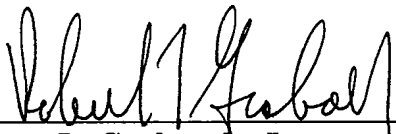
Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that even if Yoshikawa can be modified by Oshima, based on an inherency argument, to disclose Applicant's claimed feature where the hydrophilic polymer is distributed unevenly in an area near a surface of the key touch member, that this modified Yoshikawa reference cannot then further disclose the now additionally claimed feature of Applicant's invention where the hydrophilic polymer is substantially uniformly dispersed in the base within the key touch member. An inherency argument would be inconsistent if it were used to argue that both of Applicant's now claimed features are inherently disclosed by Oshima in attempting to modify Yoshikawa. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that amended independent claim 1 is allowable over the cited references.

Applicant respectfully submits that the application is now in condition for allowance with claims 1-4 being allowable. If there are any questions regarding this Amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If required, this paper should be considered to include a Petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response. Please charge any such fees, any deficiency in fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket No. 056272.58171US).

Respectfully submitted,
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